



Mayoral Proclamation

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) Awareness Day

WHEREAS, Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME), also known as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), or (ME/CFS) is a disabling multisystem neuroimmune disease characterized by persistent and profound fatigue/exhaustion, post-exertional relapse, sleep disturbances/unrefreshing sleep, cognitive impairment, pain, headaches, cardiac and other symptoms that leave many ME patients homebound or bedridden for years or a lifetime and as many as 75% unable to work or go to school; and

WHEREAS, because of stigma and lack of attention by the government and the research and medical communities, patients struggle to access appropriate medical care and rarely recover due to a lack of treatments as there is no diagnostic test, or FDA approved treatment, resulting in loss of hope and thus higher rates of suicide; and

WHEREAS, ME is believed to afflict at least 130 Takoma Park residents, 7,900 in Montgomery County, and 46,000 Marylanders of all ages, races, sexes and socio-economic status, at an annual cost to our state of \$319-450 million dollars per year in lost productivity and medical costs; and

WHEREAS, the majority of ME cases are initiated by an infection, especially viral infections, there is heightened concern that COVID-19 will trigger ME onset. Prospective studies of several different pathogens found that 10-12% of those infected met ME criteria six months after their infection. Coronaviruses like SARS may have even higher rates of triggering the disease. If that holds true, the prevalence of ME following COVID-19 could double within the next two years.

WHEREAS, awareness of ME should lead to increased funding for research and result in better diagnosis and treatment.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kate Stewart, Mayor of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, do hereby proclaim the date of May 12, 2021 as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) Awareness Day in order to help spread awareness of the disease, the need for research and appropriate medical care and to support individuals and their families living with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis.

Dated this 5th day of May, 2021.

Kate Stewart
Mayor